

Message Text

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ORIGIN DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ORM-02 EA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /071 R

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EA/VLC:TCARNEY
EA/J:MR KILPATRICK
EA:KQUINN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 180739

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, VN (NGUYEN CONG HOAN)

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY BY VIETNAMESE DEFECTOR/
REFUGEE

REG SATE 97370
TOKYO ALSO FOR HENRY KENNEY
1. NGUYEN CONG HOAN, WHO CAME TO U.S. JULY 24 AFTER ARRIV-
ING IN JAPAN IN MARCH, 1977 AS A BOAT CASE REFUGEE FROM
VIETNAM, TESTIFIED IN OPEN AND EXECUTIVE SESSIONS OF HOUSE
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE JULY 26 AND 28. HOAN
WAS A MEMBER OF SRV NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND CLAIMS TO HAVE
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TAKEN PART IN ASSEMBLY MEETINGS IN HANOI IN JUNE 1976 AND
JANUARY 1977. HE WAS PREVIOUSLY A MEMBER OF THE FORMER GVN
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, ALSO AT THAT TIME REPRESENTING HIS
HOME PROVINCE IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

2. ALTHOUGH MAIN PORTION OF HIS TESTIMONY DESCRIBED HARSH
CONDITIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN VIETNAM, CONGRESS-

IONAL AND PRESS INTEREST WAS PARTICULARLY EXCITED BY HOAN'S OBSERVATION IN HIS PREPARED STATEMENT THAT "DURING MY STAY IN NORTH VIETNAM I HEARD NEWS ABOUT MIA'S, I WAS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERSTAND THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IN DEALING WITH THE US ON THIS ISSUE." HOAN REFUSED TO EXPAND ON THAT STATEMENT IN PUBLIC SESSION, SAYING HE HAD MADE A SIMILAR COMMENT IN A PRESS CONFERENCE IN JAPAN, AT WHICH TIME HE SAID HE WISHED TO GIVE HIS INFORMATION PERSONALLY TO PRESIDENT CARTER. AFTER PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESSMEN, HOAN AGREED TO APPEAR JULY 28 IN EXECUTIVE SESSION BEFORE REP. LESTER WOLFF'S ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE TO DISCUSS HIS CLAIMED MIA INFO.

3. ESSENCE OF HIS STORY IS THAT IN A "POLICY" DISCUSSION WITH NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFICIAL TRAN QUYNH WHEN HOAN WAS IN HANOI FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEETING IN JUNE 1976, TRAN QUYNH SAID "AMONG AMERICANS LISTED AS MISSING THERE ARE SOME STILL ALIVE IN VIETNAM. HE DESCRIBED QUYNH AS DIRECTOR OF THE COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE SRV, WHO PREVIOUSLY WAS SECRETARY AND "SPEECH WRITER" FOR LE DUAN.

4. HOAN COULD PROVIDE NO SUBSTANTIATION FOR THIS REPORT, NOR WAS HE ABLE TO STATE WHETHER IT WAS INTENDED TO MEAN THERE ARE AMERICANS IN CUSTODY IN NORTH VIETNAM. IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER QUESTIONING HOAN REFERRED TO OTHER CONFIDENTIAL

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REPORTS HE SAID HE HAD HEARD OF AMERICANS STILL IN VIETNAM, IN ONE CASE FROM A "SECURITY OFFICER" AND IN ANOTHER FROM A "TEACHER" IN VIETNAM, BUT IN NO CASE WERE THE REPORTS SAID TO BE BASED ON FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE, NOR DID THEY OFFER ANY SPECIFICS CONCERNING ALLEGED AMERICANS.

5. COMMENT: HOAN SPEAKS ONLY VIETNAMESE AND DID NOT IMPRESS CONGRESSMEN OR DEPTOFFS PRESENT AS A PARTICULARLY COGENT OR RELIABLE SOURCE ON THIS SUBJECT. THERE HAVE BEEN SIMILAR HEARSAY REPORTS FROM OTHER INDOCHINA REFUGEES IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, NONE OF WHICH HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIATED. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO PROBE HOAN FURTHER TO SEE IF ANY VERIFICATION IS POSSIBLE FOR HIS CLAIMED INFORMATION. CHRISTOPHER

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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